

**Amendment to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of monitoring nodes in a network comprising a network management system and a plurality of nodes, the network management system comprising a set of identifiers in a circular list of sets, the method comprising:

processing at the network management system at least one node identified by an identifier in the set of a circular list of sets by sending a polling message from the network management station to the at least one node, at least a portion of the sets of the circular list of sets including two or more node identifiers; and

advancing to the next set of the circular list of sets; ~~and~~  
~~receiving a polling response from the at least one node at the network management system.~~

wherein processing comprises adding a copy of the identifier to a subsequent set of the circular list of sets that will be processed when a response from the node identified by the identifier is expected.

Claim 2 (canceled).

Claim 3 (previously presented): The method of claim 1 further comprising moving the identifier to a subsequent set of the circular list of sets.

Claim 4 (original): The method of claim 3, wherein the subsequent set is the set that will be processed at the next timing interval of the node identified by the identifier.

Claim 5 (canceled).

Claim 6 (canceled).

Claim 7 (original): The method of claim 1, further comprising processing polling responses.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the selecting and advancing are performed at periodic intervals.

Claim 9 (currently amended): A system, comprising:

a processor; and

a memory storing a network management system for execution by the processor for monitoring nodes in a network including a plurality of nodes, the network management system comprising:

computer code that processes at least one node identified by an identifier in a set of a circular list of sets, at least a portion of the set~~each set~~ of the circular list of sets including two ~~zero~~-or more identifiers of nodes;

computer code that adds a copy of the identifier to a subsequent set of the circular list of sets that will be processed when a response from the node identified by the identifier is expected; and

computer code that advances to the next set of the circular list of sets.

Claim 10 (currently amended): A system for monitoring nodes in a network including a plurality of nodes, comprising:

means for processing at least one node identified by an identifier in a set of a circular list of sets, at least a portion of the set~~each set~~ of the circular list of sets including two ~~zero~~-or more identifiers of nodes;

means for adding a copy of the identifier to a subsequent set of the circular list of sets that will be processed when a response from the node identified by the identifier is expected; and

means for advancing to the next set of the circular list of sets.

Claim 11 (currently amended): A method of monitoring nodes in a network comprising a network management system and a plurality of nodes, comprising:

- receiving a signal from a timer at periodic intervals;
- processing polling responses at the network management station;
- processing at least one node identified by an identifier in a set of a circular list of sets by sending a polling message to the at least one node from the network management station and adding a copy of the identifier to a subsequent set of the circular list of sets that will be processed when a response from the node identified by the identifier is expected, at least a portion of the sets ~~each set~~ of the circular list of sets including two ~~zero~~ or more identifiers of nodes; and
- advancing to the next set of the circular list of sets;
- wherein each of said identifiers comprises a pointer into a table stored in said network management station.

Claim 12 (original): The method of claim 11, wherein the processing the at least one node includes moving the identifier to a subsequent set of the circular list of sets.

Claim 13 (original): The method of claim 12, wherein the subsequent set is the set that will be processed at the next timing interval of the node identified by the identifier.

Claim 14 (canceled).

Claim 15 (canceled).

Claim 16 (currently amended): A system, comprising:

- a processor; and
- a memory storing a network management system for execution by the processor for monitoring nodes in a network including a plurality of nodes, the network management system comprising:

computer code for a timer that generates a signal at periodic intervals;

computer code for a poller that processes polling responses; processes at least one node identified by an identifier in a set of a circular list of sets by sending a polling message to the at least one node, and adding a copy of the identifier to a subsequent set of the circular list of sets that will be processed when a response from the node identified by the identifier is expected, at least a portion of the sets~~each set~~ of the circular list of sets including two~~zero~~ or more identifiers of nodes; and advances to the next set of the circular list of sets.

Claim 17 (currently amended):        A system for monitoring nodes in a network including a plurality of nodes, comprising:  
     means for receiving a signal from a timer at periodic intervals;  
     means for processing polling responses;  
     means for processing at least one node identified by an identifier in a set of a circular list of sets by sending a polling message to the at least one node and adding a copy of the identifier to a subsequent set of the circular list of sets that will be processed when a response from the node identified by the identifier is expected, at least a portion of the sets~~each set~~ of the circular list of sets including two~~zero~~ or more identifiers of nodes; and  
     means for advancing to the next set of the circular list of sets.

Claim 18 (previously presented): The method of claim 11 wherein said table comprises IP addresses of said plurality of nodes in the network and a transmission count representing the number of polling messages sent to each of said nodes.

Claim 19 (previously presented): The method of claim 11 wherein processing polling responses comprises removing the polling response from a buffer.

Claim 20 (previously presented): The method of claim 11 wherein processing polling responses comprises updating a transmission count for the node sending the polling response to indicate the number of polling responses that have been received from the node.

Claim 21 (previously presented): The method of claim 11 further comprising creating a copy of the pointer in the circular list when a response from a polling message is expected to be received.

Claim 22 (new): The method of claim 1 wherein processing at least one node comprises retrieving an entry for the node in a table.

Claim 23 (new): The method of claim 22 wherein the table comprises information on the nodes identified by the identifiers including IP addresses of the nodes.